

**COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

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| <b>Academic School/Department:</b> | Communications, Arts and Social Sciences                       |
| <b>Programme:</b>                  |  |
| <b>FHEQ Level:</b>                 | 5000   |
| <b>Course Title:</b>               | <b>Mysticism and Magic in Medieval &amp; Renaissance Italy</b> |
| <b>Course Code:</b>                | PHL 310  |
| <b>Course Leader:</b>              | Monica Giovannini (Florence)                                   |
| <b>Student Engagement Hours:</b>   | 120  |
| Lectures:                          | 45   |
| Seminar / Tutorials:               |  |
| Independent / Guided Learning:     | 75   |
| <b>Semester:</b>                   | Spring   |
| <b>Credits:</b>                    | 12 UK CATS credits<br>6 ECTS credits<br>3 US credits           |

**Course Description:**

ITALIAN STUDY CENTRES ONLY. This course considers the role of Medieval mysticism and Renaissance magic in the genesis of the modern world. It examines key topics such as the function of magic in archaic societies and the representation of Hell and demonization in the late Middle Ages, together with the Medieval ideal of perfection as represented in Dante's Divine Comedy and reflected in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. By the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Florence had become the irradiating center for the new doctrine on the magus ideal, formulated by Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. This new direction in European thought was further developed into modern science by the contribution of Leonardo, Galileo and Giordano Bruno.

**Prerequisites:** GEP 4180 Research and Writing 2

**Aims and Objectives:**

This course aims to:

- embed the concepts of religion, philosophy, science, magic and mysticism in their historical context
- reveal the contribution of Italian personalities to Medieval and Renaissance culture
- debate Aristotelian, Platonic and Neo-platonic ideas in the Medieval and Renaissance context, focusing on the models of the universe, nature and love
- define the importance of the divine and the special connection between man and God as experienced in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance
- present the dark side of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as evidenced in witch-hunts and religious persecution
- point out the consequences of ideas and ideals of the past on modern life

**Programme Outcomes:**

This is a stand-alone course

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:  
<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-schools/academic-registry/program-and-course-specifications.aspx>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- demonstrate accurate conceptual analysis of the primary sources and the themes explored during the course
- demonstrate an ability to think historically and to follow the dynamism of cultural ideas, their impact on institutions and their conflict with authority
- demonstrate an ability to conduct research in the field, building effectively upon established scholarly work

**Indicative Content:**

- Site visits
- Early historical references to magic: the Bible, Rome and Christianity
- The Medieval World: Assisi and Dante
- Theories on demons. Thomas Aquinas on magic
- The figure of the witch in texts and trials
- Renaissance Thinkers: Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Botticelli Da Vinci and Giordano Bruno.
- Astrology, astronomy. Copernicus, Galileo.

**Assessment:**

